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AUTHOR	Ottina, John R.
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ABSTRACT

In light of today's inflation and the changing priorities of the present Administration, the Office of Education (OE) has taken careful stock of its inventory of programs and has attempted to plan rigorously for the needs of the present and the future. Over the years, OE expenditures on library programs have had significant impact on public, school, and academic libraries. Now, the very success of these funding programs, and the assumption that they can now be better handled by state and local agencies, has prompted the Office of Education to gradually phase out funding, and to consider new initiatives which conform to a known Administration posture--that all Federal initiatives be closely tied to local innovative services. The proposed Information Partnership Act is based on this percept; that the Federal government has a joint role with the states and localities. The Act's purpose is to encourage, support, and provide incentives to local, state and regional groups to work together to provide more accessible and comprehensive information services to more people. Included will be support of a wide range of cooperative information networks and of new information delivery systems for all types of libraries. (SL)

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USOE AND THE LIBRARY ROLE

By

John R. Ottina
U. S. Commissioner of Education

Introduction

I would like to take this opportunity to discuss with you what has been--and may well continue to be--a dialogue about the Federal role in developing and administering programs which affect libraries. I enter into this discussion recognizing the significant roles that many of you and your associations have had in determining not only the content and direction of the present programs but also the budgetary levels which support them. If I may, I would like to provide some background for our discussion by briefly outlining the general direction and priorities of this Administration as they pertain to the Federal domestic programs in education and other areas of human resources.

The Office of Education has had to determine whether many of its programs which were the products of the late 50's and the decade of the 1960's were working effectively. In other words it had to examine the needs of today and find out whether they are the same as those of the post-Sputnik era and the tumultuous Sixties. It is noteworthy that over the past 10 years Office of Education programs have increased in number from 20 to more than 100; OE budget dollars have increased from $600 million to more than $5 billion and OE employees from 1,100 to 2,800.

Despite the proliferation of programs and the magnitude of

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*Presented to a group of leaders of the American Library Association and other library groups at the O'Hare Inn, Chicago, March 8, 1974.

the Federal role, frustrations and disappointments are evident in our fundamental institutions. These questions are being asked: What are the particular local and State responsibilities in carrying out the human resources mission? What are the creative partnership roles among Federal, State, and local governments in programmatic endeavors which might improve the service delivery systems to our Nation's citizens?

There is little doubt that the inflationary aspects of our economy and the attendant growing Federal budget continues to complicate our attempts to select the best programs designed to reach most economically the needs of our citizenry. The magnitude of these considerations is enormous when one notes that expenditures for human resources have risen from 39 percent of the total federal budget to 44 percent in recent years. Despite these gains, much remains to be done.

Faced by the shortcomings and weaknesses in human resources programs, the Administration has had to be concerned with the needs and demands of the 70's, accenting the positive and offering encouragement to a people wearied by disappointment, anxiety, and strife in the area of human resources.

Within this policy framework, we in the Office of Education have taken careful stock in our inventory of programs and have attempted to plan rigorously for the critical needs of the present and the future. We have mounted some major new initiatives. Here are some examples. Through the Education Amendments of 1972 we have mounted initiatives in:-Student aid (under the Basic Educational Opportunity Grants Program)--in minority institutional assistance

(under the Developing Institutions Program)--in special postsecondary innovative programs (through the fund for the improvement of Postsecondary Education)--and we have merged educational research capabilities in the National Institute of Education. Other recent thrusts--in Career Education, Right-to-Read, and the Emergency School Assistance programs, which address the problems of equalizing educational opportunities for elementary and secondary minority students--are only some of the efforts which will also assure that the spark of educational leadership will remain a high concern of this Administration.

Present Library Focus In OE

With this introduction in mind let us look at the library role of the Office of Education. Here, I believe we have had reasonable success. Federal expenditures in support of all library programs over the years, which have exceeded $1.5 billion, have had significant impact. For example, two decades ago, a survey by the Office on the extent of public library services in America revealed that 30 million Americans--about 20 percent of the population--were without services of a library, and millions more were being served only marginally. Now over a decade later, 193 million Americans have access to a library system. Of these, 17 million are receiving library services for the first time. This program has set an encouraging precedent. Since the inception of the public library programs in 1956 more than 560 million in Federal dollars have been made available and matched by more than $1.5 billion in State and local funds.

Since 1967 over $20 million of Federal seed money have been used at State agency levels to promote the integration and cooperation of information handling services among 9,000 public, school, academic, and specialized industrial libraries--thereby maximizing the use of State and local information agencies.

Thanks to Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Act all but 19 percent of elementary schools and 6 percent of secondary schools have media centers. Nearly 29,000 public and private schools report they have substantially improved services through Title II funds since 1966.

Through Title II of the Higher Education Act over $135 million have helped academic institutions to acquire books and other library materials. More than $35 million have supported the training of library career and media specialists so that their skills and techniques might be more relevant in serving the needs of an information-consuming society. Last year alone, more than 200 minority and economically disadvantaged persons either initiated or completed training for meeting the "survival" information needs of the nation's underprivileged, inner-city residents.

Nearly $18 million has been spent on library and information research and demonstration projects. These projects were designed to improve library and information service systems and techniques, and then demonstrate that their findings can provide fresh and imaginative systems for our communities already served by a host of libraries and information centers. More about these demonstration efforts later.

But whether Federal funds were used to establish exemplary information and educational delivery systems for the student, the adult, the physically

handicapped, and others who are economically disadvantaged, the greatest long-term benefit has been this--States, localities, and institutions have become more aware of the media needs and potential of libraries and information centers and have been increasingly challenged to support them with the incentive capital provided by the average 5 to 6 percent Federal investment. I believe it is time for all of us--the Office of Education, the library community, and Congress--to take stock of this Federal effort in light of the budgetary concerns outlined previously and to determine where those limited Federal dollars might be targeted best to support the needed development of our Nation's library and information services. Let me describe briefly the legislative status of the Office's library programs and then outline a strategy we propose as a viable Federal library posture.

Since fiscal year 1972 the Office has proposed significant reductions in the funding for programs in support of public, school, and academic libraries. This proposal is based on some of the considerations discussed earlier--the success of these programs in meeting their mission and the attempt to reorder national priorities. In line with an overall assessment of domestic programs in fiscal year 1974, the Office recommended that no funds be appropriated for any of the present categorical library programs.

The position of reduced or no funding was based on the assumption that programs sponsored successfully by the Federal initiative might now be more properly run by State and local governments and institutions.

As all of you know, Congress, in virtually every instance, has supported

the library programs and rejected the proposed termination at this point. In light of the Administration's domestic priorities and this Congressional interest and support for these programs, the Office is prepared to seek a more gradual phase-out of existing library programs and consider new initiatives based on a known Administration posture; that is, the assumption that all Federal initiatives be closely tied to State and local innovative services.

At this point, it might be helpful to summarize briefly the present library programs and proposed directions for each:

(1) School libraries. Support for school libraries is provided for under "School Library and Media Resources," Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and under "Instructional Equipment and Minor Remodeling," Title III of the National Defense Education Act. Both are formula grant programs which are slated for the Consolidated Elementary and Secondary grant reform legislative proposal now being considered in the Congress. The Administration proposal would allow for a "Support Services" category made up of the present programs plus ESEA V. The total Administration recommendation for this category in Fiscal Year 1975 is expected to be approximately $158 million. When all

the elements of the consolidated act are put into place, the State and local education agencies will be able to tailor these programs and resources much more easily to the specific needs of the constituencies, a feat that was much less possible under the more strictly categorical approach.

(2) Academic libraries. This program, which comes under Title II-A of the Higher Education Act, essentially provides $5,000 grants to virtually every accredited institution of higher education for the purchase of library books and materials. But the Office is shifting its emphasis to support of students who, in effect, carry these Federal funds to institutions of their choice. The decision as to the best uses of those "institutional" dollars will be left to those most familiar with their institutional needs. The Office is, therefore, proposing zero funding in the last year of its authorization, fiscal year 1975, with the anticipation that the leadership of the institutions will determine those library and information service needs which funds from other Federal programs can be used to support and strengthen.

(3) Library career training and library demonstrations. These come under Title II-B of the Higher Education Act.

Title II-B provides support for the training of library personnel as well as a flexible research and demonstration program. There is a clear obstacle to addressing these separate needs in that the legislation ties three disparate programs--academic library resources, library career training, and library and information service demonstrations--through a percentage allocation favoring book resources. This allocation is 70 percent, leaving 20 percent and 10 percent for training and demonstrations, respectively. As the Higher Education Act authorization expires at the end of 1975, it is highly unlikely that we can or should seek amendments of the percentage lock-in to make, for example, more funds available for needed library service demonstrations. We are, therefore, requesting zero funding for Title II in fiscal year 1975 so that these priorities might be reordered. I'll have more to say about this a little later on.

(4) Public Library Services. This comes under Titles I and III of the Library Services and Construction Act. Title I provides State grants, as you know, on a formula matching basis for the support of local public libraries. One measure of the success of the program is the ability to stimulate the growth of State grant-in-aid programs to

local libraries. At the time of the enactment of the Federal public library program in 1956, only six States had programs of direct State aid to local public libraries expending more than $200,000, the sum of the basic allotment under LSCA. By 1973, 36 States had such programs for local library development.

Although LSCA Title I funds have become more concentrated on the disadvantaged and previously unserved groups, and have supported many innovative projects (with which we are familiar) that could not have been initiated locally, Title I of LSCA is still an operational program with limited capabilities to redirect priorities.

Title III of LSCA, Interlibrary Cooperation, was funded at relatively low levels, averaging $3 to $4 million per year. It authorizes a wide range of cooperative services and institutional arrangements. As a State formula grant program, however, Title III does not lend itself well to interstate or regional cooperative efforts of nationwide significance.

Our recommendations, then, are that we promote the gradual phase-down of LSCA Title I through fiscal 1976, the final years of its authorization. More specifically, we are

proposing funding at $25 million in fiscal 1975 and a smaller amount in fiscal 1976. This gradual, two-year phase-down would provide time and funds for a reasonable conversion to State and local support for public library programs. It will also provide continuity for a possible new Federal effort in support of library programs designed to serve a broader spectrum of library needs and services. For LSCA Title III, therefore, we will request no funding in fiscal years 75 or 76; but will suggest that the transfer of this focus and effort might be made to an entirely new piece of legislation.

Information Partnership Act

At this time I might share some of the Office's thinking on the parameters of the continuing Federal role under such legislation. These will be ideas on which I invite your comments and suggestions.

Our rationale for the proposed Information Partnership Act is Based on the precept that the Federal government has a joint role with the States and localities. Its purpose is to encourage, support, and provide incentives to local, State, and regional groups to work together to provide more accessible and comprehensive informational services to greater numbers of people. It is also intended to provide seed money

for the library and information demonstration projects which are designed to demonstrate new information delivery systems and improved library services which can better meet the education and information needs of the population in the 1970's.

There are numerous State and local innovative demonstrations of library and information service activity on which the proposed Information Partnership Act might build. We know, for example, that the Office has largely supported information service, networks, and demonstrations through the more narrow categorical focus of Titles I and III of LSCA and Title II-B of HEA (Research and Demonstrations). Many of these efforts are signal successes which I need not elaborate upon to this audience. Informational networks are springing up on a regional basis, such as the Southwest Library Interstate Cooperative Endeavor (SLICE), and the cost-saving acquisition and processing systems growing under the aegis of the Ohio College Library Center, which now serve over 100 institutions both public and academic. We know that these informational networks are examples of activities which may need to be expanded and replicated for more adequate service to unserved groups. Emphasis in this program should, however, be given to encouraging communities to pool their own library informational resources to provide better services for all.

At present approximately 9,000 libraries, which comprise less than 10 percent of the universe of institutions, are involved in over 120 major cooperative networks under Title III of ISCA. Most

of these arrangements have helped to lessen institutional parochialism and have given individual users access to a range of informational and educational services not provided in one institution. There are over 80,000 libraries--including school, academic, and public libraries, plus private, industrial, and other special libraries such as those in the fields of law and medicine (not to mention other educational institutions). Certainly, the needs of these libraries should be looked at for potential cost-saving cooperative institutional service patterns and arrangements.

We propose that a wide range of cooperative information activities among many types of educational and social agencies be supported under the Information Partnership Act.

We also know that the library demonstration funds have been successful in generating new information delivery systems. The sites of such projects as the Philadelphia Action Library, the 5-city Neighborhood Information Centers, and the College Entrance Examination Board which demonstrate experimental uses of public libraries across America have been visited by concerned professionals and have led to systematic changes in operating library and information systems. The support of these demonstrations evolves out of the national concern to focus on change in traditional and non-responsive library service patterns. in these latter efforts, the Federal involvement has been particularly effective in generating State, local, and private matching monies. We propose that demonstrations

of this nature be continued under the proposed Information Partnership Act. Although all projects would be fully funded for their first year, a built-in escalating clause will be recommended in the Act to require an increasing contribution of State and local funds for subsequent years for multi-year grants. For fiscal year 1975 we are recommending that the Information Partnership Act be funded at $15 million to support these activities during the LSCA phase-out period.

These are the Office's ideas on the Federal-State-local partnership on which I invite your responses. Certainly there may be other ways--ways we have not thought of--in which we can look at the Federal investment capital in this partnership. In the last analysis, the commitment expressed is the mandate of the Presidentially appointed National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (P.L. 91-345). The Commission stated:

> library and information services adequate to meet the needs of the people of the United States are essential to achieve national goals and to utilize most effectively the Nation's educational resources and that the Federal Government will cooperate with State and local governments and public and private agencies in assuring optimum provision of such services.

We pledge our involvement in promoting that partnership.